

Coast Guard, State Legislators to Join Melancon in Surveying Oil Slick
May 15, 2010

WASHINGTON D.C. – Saturday, U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) will tour the coast along Terrebonne, Lafourche and Jefferson Parishes by helicopter with south Louisiana state legislators. They will survey the impact of the oil leak from the Deepwater Horizon disaster on the coastline west of the Mississippi River. The Congressman will land at Port Fourchon and meet with Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph and other local officials at the Emergency Operations Center located at the port.

Joining Congressman Melancon for the flyover will be U.S. Coast Guard Captain Edwin Stanton, Federal Coordinating Officer for the Houma Incident Command Post. State Senator Norby Chabert (Houma), state Senator Butch Gautreaux (Morgan City), and state Representative Karen St. Germain (Pierre Part) will also take part in the helicopter tour.

Congressman Melancon represents Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes and most of coastal southeastern Louisiana in the U.S. Congress. Last week, Congressman Melancon received a briefing on [Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes' response plans](#) to the oil rig disaster at BP's facility in Houma. He heard from Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph and a representative from Terrebonne Parish who detailed their plans for boom deployment and other protective measures to prevent the oil sheen from damaging their coastal marshes.

The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana's Third Congressional District.

Congressman Melancon has been leading efforts in Louisiana to coordinate the response to the oil leak caused by the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil platform three weeks ago. Last Friday, Congressman Melancon [traveled with a bipartisan delegation of Energy and Commerce Committee members](#) visiting south Louisiana to investigate the oil leak and evaluate the response and containment efforts.

Recently, Congressman Melancon held a town hall in St. Bernard Parish to listen to the concerns of south Louisianians about the oil leak disaster in the Gulf of Mexico and provide information about the response efforts. Representatives from the Coast Guard, BP, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Louisiana State University, Louisiana's seafood industry, and St. Bernard Parish officials took part in the town hall to help answer questions and listen to concerns.

Congressman Melancon also [toured by boat the coastal marshes in St. Bernard Parish](#) with parish officials and viewed the efforts of local fishermen to deploy boom. Over one million feet of protective boom have been deployed to protect Louisiana's fragile coastal marshes from the oil slick.

In his conversations with local fishermen and parish officials involved in laying the boom, Congressman Melancon learned they were facing a severe shortage in boom material, hindering their ability to protect the coast. In response, Congressman Melancon [sent a letter](#)

[to President Barack Obama](#)

last Friday requesting military aircraft be used to help bring protective boom to the Gulf Coast more quickly. The President granted his request and Tuesday the first Air Force aircraft arrived in Belle Chasse with additional boom.

Congressman Melancon has also been working to minimize the economic impact of the oil leak on Louisiana's seafood industry. On April 29th, the Congressman [contacted the Secretary of Commerce and the head of NOAA's Fisheries Service](#)

urging them to prepare to direct disaster funding to Louisiana's commercial and recreational fishermen.

[In his letter](#)

, Congressman Melancon noted that the oil intrusion resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil rig disaster would likely damage the fragile habitats on which Louisiana's fishermen, oystermen, and shrimpers depend.

Congressman Melancon traveled to lower Plaquemines Parish to meet with NOAA Administrator Jane Lubchenco to discuss how to lessen the impact of the oil leak on Louisiana's vital fishing industry.

Congressman Melancon also [met with commercial and recreational fishermen in St. Bernard Parish](#)

involved in the oil leak containment work. While there,

Congressman Melancon also met with

[Environmental](#)

[Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson](#)

, St. Bernard Parish President Craig Taffaro, St. Bernard head of the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness John Rahim, and other local, state and federal officials to evaluate current efforts to minimize damage to Louisiana's coastal marshes and fishing grounds.

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